



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2009**

**Grade 7
Reading**

Reading

Use the definitions below to answer the question.

bound *adj* 1. sure, certain 2. determined
3. obligated 4. tied, secured

- ❶ Which is the **best** definition of the word bound as it is used in the sentence?

He was bound to get tired of pouting, eventually.

- A. definition 1
- B. definition 2
- C. definition 3
- D. definition 4

- ❷ An **antonym** for the word obvious is

- A. accepted.
- B. similar.
- C. disappointing.
- D. unclear.

Dillon arrives at his family's summer cottage at the lake. He is on vacation with his parents, his brother Didier, and his sister Daisy. Read this passage from the novel Dillon Dillon. Then answer the questions that follow.

At the Summer Cottage

Kate Banks

Dillon's father stopped the car. The blinds of the cottage were down and the windows and doors sealed tight. But the little house smiled out at them all the same, its blue stained clapboards beaming under the sun. Dillon couldn't help but smile back.

2 Dillon's father stepped out of the car. "Here we are!" he cried. He turned in a circle and took in the nature that surrounded them. He had worked six days a week the entire year to have these two glorious months with no television. No deadlines. No traffic. "To shed the weary hide of winter and grow a new skin," as he put it.

3 Dillon slid from the car. He and Didier began unloading boxes and bags from the trunk. Wrapping paper, rubber bands, glue, mousetraps, provisions they would probably never need. But Dillon was used to this. This was his mother. She lived by the Scout motto, "Be prepared."

Didier set down a cardboard carton on the kitchen table and groaned. "I hate unpacking," he said. He held up a tube of shoe polish. "Do we really need this?" he asked. "For our sneakers?"

"What if a pair of dress shoes fell from the sky?" teased his mother.

"Shoes don't fall from the sky," said Didier matter-of-factly. Dillon knew he was right. But the idea of shoes tumbling through the clouds, sneakers, and pastel-pink sandals tripping through the air, made Dillon feel happy inside.

Didier held up a package of industrial-sized sponges. "What if the lake floods?" he said. Dillon's mother rolled her eyes.

Dillon laughed. What if was a land of endless possibilities. "What if we could fly?" he said. "What if you could see around a corner before even getting

there?" Dillon paused. "What if you'd called me David instead of Dillon?" he added, hardly realizing what he had said. But no one had heard, caught up as they were in the notion of what could and what might be.

Dillon finished unloading the car. He wandered out to the lawn.

"Look!" cried Daisy. Dillon looked. Daisy was crouched in a thicket of tall grass and brown-eyed Susans. She cupped a grasshopper in her hand. "It's missing a leg," she said sadly. Dillon leaned forward to look at the bright green bug. Its eye was staring at him. It seemed to be telling him something. Dillon turned away. Now it was Didier's turn.

Didier positioned himself level with the grasshopper. He looked it straight in the eye.

"Hey, fella," he said. He held the knuckle of his finger under the grasshopper's body, so close that its shadow turned his finger green. "Want to get down?" he asked. He did not wait for an answer. "He wants to go," he said to Daisy.

13 Daisy gently set the grasshopper on a tuft of grass. It hopped off on its one strong leg. But Dillon could still feel its eye like a moonbeam piercing the night. He could not rid himself of the thought that the grasshopper had wanted to say something to him, and he had turned away. Dillon waited for the grasshopper to come back, waited for a second chance, but the grasshopper had moved on. Daisy had moved on too. She was knee-deep in wildflowers, collecting a bouquet of Queen Anne's lace. Didier had begun sorting through a tackle box of fishing flies. And Dillon was stuck in a moment that had already passed.

- 3 In paragraph 2, why is Dillon's father so happy?
- A. The cottage is exactly as he remembered it.
 - B. He has worked very hard for this vacation.
 - C. His family has surprised him with a vacation.
 - D. The cottage is much nicer than he expected it to be.

- 4 In paragraph 3, what does the word provisions mean?
- A. supplies
 - B. presents
 - C. candy
 - D. games

- 5 In paragraph 13, the phrase "like a moonbeam piercing the night" describes
- A. the grasshopper's important message.
 - B. the power of the grasshopper's gaze.
 - C. the speed of the grasshopper's retreat.
 - D. the grasshopper's bright green color.

- 6 At the end of the passage, what does Dillon regret?
- A. hurting his sister's feelings
 - B. not helping his brother unload the car
 - C. turning away from the grasshopper
 - D. spending the summer in the country

- 7 How does Dillon show he is using his imagination throughout this passage? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

Read this article about discoveries on the shores of Crawford Lake in Canada and then answer the questions that follow.

Underwater Clues to a Buried Village

Katherine Grier

Crawford Lake is a small, deep lake west of Toronto. Lakes of this kind, called “meromictic lakes,” are found all over the world. But they are rare and of special interest to many scientists. Why?

In most lakes, all the water mixes together and churns up the mud on the bottom. In meromictic lakes, the water is so deep that it doesn’t get disturbed. Things that fall into the lake sink to the bottom, pile up and stay there for thousands of years in layers that you can see. Because of this, palaeobotanists (scientists who study fossilized plants) can take samples of bottom mud and find out about the plants that lived on the shores of the lake long ago.

That’s just what was happening at Crawford Lake in 1971. A palaeobotanist decided to collect a sample of bottom mud in order to study the pollen grains it contained. By looking at the fossilized pollen in the lake mud, he hoped to learn what plants had grown near the lake for hundreds of years and how they had changed.

4 To collect bottom mud, the botanist filled a heavy hollow tube with dry ice to make it freezing cold. He lowered this “frigid finger” into the lake and into the mud. When he pulled it up ten minutes later, it was coated with a thin crust of frozen mud.

Back at the lab, the botanist and his assistant studied the frozen crust. They could see layers, two for each year. The top two layers were from 1971. The further down they went, the older the layers and the pollen were.

Then they found something unusual. The mud layers that were about 530 years old were loaded with corn pollen. At first the botanist didn’t believe it. Why would corn pollen suddenly show up in the middle of a forest? Had native people lived on the shores of the lake, cut down the trees and planted corn fields? The botanist went to an archaeologist for help.

How do you find the remains of a settlement that disappeared long ago? If you’re an archaeologist, you look for signs that people have somehow changed the land—telltale ridges or bumps or hollows. You watch for artifacts dug up by groundhogs or by a farmer’s plough. And you go to people who know the land better than you do—like farmers.

It turned out that the farmer who had lived on the shores of Crawford Lake had collected a basketful of stone axes and arrowheads on his land. He’d found most of them in his barnyard. Sure enough, when archaeologists dug up the barnyard, they found pottery, food storage pits, stains from old firepits and marks in the earth from long house posts. And in the garbage pits, they found charred kernels of corn! The botanist’s guess was right. Native people had once lived on the shores of the lake and had grown corn.

- 8 How do meromictic lakes differ from other lakes?
- A. They are much smaller and shallower.
 - B. Their bottom waters do not get disturbed.
 - C. They are not located in northern regions.
 - D. Their bottoms are covered with thick mud.

- 9 In paragraph 4, the word frigid means
- A. very deep.
 - B. soaking wet.
 - C. extremely cold.
 - D. completely free.

- 10 What led the scientists to believe they had found something important?
- A. They met a farmer who was clearing his barnyard.
 - B. They discovered corn pollen in an unusual place.
 - C. They met archaeologists digging near the lake.
 - D. They discovered an ancient burial ground.

- 11 Which fact about human activities helps archaeologists locate ancient settlements?
- A. Corn has been grown by nearly all people.
 - B. Villages are usually located next to lakes.
 - C. People change the land wherever they live.
 - D. The same farmland is used over and over again.

- 12 Explain the method the scientists used to collect and study bottom samples at Crawford Lake. Use information from the article to support your answer.

Acknowledgments

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